



Vanik Voice

February 2014

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e- News Letter :

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Mr Anil Parekh

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EDITOR'S REPORT

We all welcome the new year 2014 with great hope and confidence. NCVA wishes all members a very happy and prosperous new year.

This year NCVA will be celebrating its 35th Anniversary with various programs and awareness drive.

My first issue of Vanik Voice was well received and I had received some suggestions and comments which I appreciate and will endeavour to incorporate in future issues.

It is the aim of this newsletter to bring the wider Vanik Community in touch with each other and in so doing to uphold our historical, cultural and religious values. This will be done in an informative and interesting manner without offence to any other religion, race or culture.

I am hoping to publish some articles about some key elements of our religion and faith to clarify some misconceptions and misunderstanding as well as get this understood better by ourselves.

Any contributions in this by some learned people in our community will be welcome.

Anil Parekh

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Affiliated Associations

Vegetarianism- A short story

It was the late 50's after India Independence from British ,Raj and some rich Indians still had been sending their sons to England to become doctors or barristers so that they could establish with better position and respect when they return.

There were three very close friends sitting in a restaurant near Bond Street, London. It was a nice and convenient one not far from Lincoln's Inn where they were doing their articles for Bar. One was Mark Knox who was the only son of a rich English Peer. other two were Indians, one was Yusuf Ali, a son of a Muslim businessman from Bombay (Mumbai) while the other was Achyut Desai, a son of a Lawyer from Ahmedabad, Gujarat. Mark and Yusuf ordered some chicken dishes while Achyut asked for vegetable soup, bread and butter and boiled potatoes. He was shy, quiet type and strictly vegetarian. His friends tried to convince him that he should eat meat some times in this cold country but in vain. He would not argue but sometimes felt lonely and out of place when many students met together for a party and enjoy themselves.

Exams were over and students assembled in a Hall for the send-off meeting. Some were from different countries and it was time to say goodbye. There were some speeches and dinner at the end. Students spoke on the subjects they liked. Mark and Yusuf insisted Achyut too should speak on his favourite topic. He had a stage fright and was not keen but he gave in at last.

Achyut :

Hi Friends (in a shaky voice),

I want to speak on something I feel most passionate about. I do not intend to offend any person, religion or community. It's about Vegetarianism

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Why a human being has to be a vegetarian because the Mother Nature wants him so. Look at his physique. He (or She) has blunt flat short teeth, short flat nails and toes without claws, which are intended for vegetarian. They are like those of cows, sheep, horses, elephants. These animals are vegetarian, then why not humans?!

Some non-veg. people say we need meat for strength, vitamins and to fight against diseases. But this doesn't hold water as the strong animals like elephants, cows and horses are vegetarian who do the hardest tasks and races for human profits and pleasures. Our nearest link on Evolution, a Chimpanzee or Gorilla lives only on vegetation. Aren't they strong and healthy?!

To our surprise and sorrow, we kill the same most useful animals for their flesh, skins, tusks, etc. We drink cow's milk, she is like a mother and still we kill her. We even go to war and kill our own race for greed and power!!! Have we lost our way, where is that Milk of Humanity we often talk about?! Don't you think to kill these innocent animals and birds is against all morality? If we can't give life, we should not take life.

Some people eat chicken, lamb, beef, etc. Even these species' bodies build from mere vegetation. Then why not human shouldn't eat directly green fruits, vegetables, pulses and grains without killing them?! As these docile animals can't complain and are helpless, we Do NOT have to kill them. As once Gandhiji said, "Life of a lamb is no less important than that of a human being." As we have families and feelings, so have they.

The Nature has given lions, tigers, leopards, sharp long teeth and claws. They are carnivore because they live in jungle without any alternative except to protect themselves and kill to survive. Even they kill the minimum when they are hungry. I understand human had to kill to survive when he was primitive and in wilderness and there was not much arable land. But now in this modern time of technological excellence, when he can make computers, send rockets to the Moon, Mars, Saturn and beyond and make advances in medicine to save lives, then why has he made animal farms to cull them in thousands for profits on a commercial scale or export

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them in the most appalling conditions to other countries?! It's a stain on the human race. What an Irony!

When God has given him super brain, enough land and water on this earth and lots of natural resources, he, through UN and Western Aids, should make the most of them by building canals, dams and wells in Africa and many other underdeveloped countries and grow lots of fruits, vegetables, grains and spices for the whole world, thus avoiding forever starvation due to vagaries of weather. This way with lot more plants, trees and vegetations, Imminent Problem of CO2 and Global Warming will also be tackled, the world will be Greener.

Believe me vegetarian food has more variety and better taste than non-veg. It's far cheaper as well. With right combination of green vegetables, fruits, milk, dried fruits, pulses, wheat, rice, corn, etc., it's much healthier than non-veg. food.

Another important point is we do not fully know all the animal and bird diseases. If per chance we eat some stale, contaminated and diseased animals or birds, we may end up catching these diseases ourselves and who knows in the long run most of the human race may be afflicted and wiped out!!! Animal farms create more dirt, pollution and danger to the human race!

Some people may argue, if we close animal and chicken farms there will be lot of unemployment. But if we develop land all the world over with all the natural and human resources to grow all the variety of grains, fruits, vegetables and spices, there will be lots of new employments. Just as new technology in the beginning creates short-term unemployment but later results in other employment in mfg. and services, so, in the end it'll work out for better. Hence, we should harness all the resources to Vegetarianism.

Last but not least, too much meat is a health hazard. In the long run people will suffer from obesity, heart diseases and what not! It'll be an enormous strain on the NHS and waste of financial and human resources. Thus National Health lies in Vegetarianism.

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With increased Industrialisation and Corporal and Corporeal Materialism the world over, CO2 and Global Warming would become the most Burning Problems of the future. If we Do Not harness them very soon, they would be the biggest threat to Mankind. All the Glaciers in the Arctic and Antarctic will be fast melting, Snows on the Himalayas and elsewhere will disappear, Rain Forests are continuously destroyed, More Oil, Gas, Wind, Nuclear and other energies will be used . As such, we are heading towards Self-Destruction! Now the only way we tackle these Crises would be to slow down on Deforestation and grow more Plants and Trees wherever we can, in the gardens, around schools, on the roadsides, in the farms for Grains, Fruits Flowers, Medicines and of course turning ourselves Vegetarian. Thus Earth will also be full of Wildlife, Cleaner, Calmer, Greener and of course more Beautiful to Live In

Leonardo Da Vinci, the celebrated Italian painter who painted unique picture of Mona Lisa, was a vegetarian. He didn't want to kill anything which moves and feels pain. He didn't excel as much as Michel Angelo because he loved the Nature and its intricate Design, Beauty and Working. He was interested in the Flight of a Bird, Colour of a Rainbow, Water, Wind, Light, Human and other Living Species and the Universe. Likewise we all should love and respect all the Natural Beauty and Diversity.

George Bernard Shaw was also a vegetarian. Once he was invited to a party. When he reached there, he was served non-veg. food, wine and cigarettes. He was a fearless man who could shock the world to make it better. He said, "I don't eat meat like savages, fuddle my brain with wine and pollute my soul with smoke." And he walked away -----

Article supplied by : Upendra Kapadia

JAIN RECIPE



ALL TIME FAVOURITE DABELI WITH A SOUTH INDIAN TOUCH.

~ INGREDIENTS ~

FOR THE IDLI

- 300 gram rice (uncooked)
- 100 gram Urad Dal
- 1 teaspoon methi seeds
- 1 teaspoon eno
- salt to taste

FOR THE DABELI

- 4 raw bananas
- 6 tablespoons green [coriander chutney](#)
- 6 tablespoons [meethi chutney](#)
- 2 tablespoons chopped coriander
- 2 teaspoons dabeli masala
- 2-3 tablespoons pomegranate seeds
- 1 tablespoon oil

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PREPARATION METHOD

For the Idli

1. Thoroughly wash and soak rice and urad dal for around 4-5 hours along with the methi seeds.
2. Remove the excess water if required. Grind the mixture to form a thick consistent batter.
3. Keep this batter aside for a few hours (3-4 hours) in a warm area for fermentation.
4. Once it ferments, add salt and eno as required.
5. Now take idli moulds and grease them with little oil. Pour the batter into these moulds and then steam them for around 10-15 minutes.

For the Dabeli

1. Boil the raw bananas. After boiling them mash them with a masher.
2. Take some oil in a pan. Add the mashed bananas, green chutney, meethi chutney, salt, dabeli masala and chooped coriander. Mix the ingredients well and cook for some time.

To Proceed

1. Take each idli and cut it horizontally through the centre.
2. Take the bottom half of the idli and place the dabeli mixture and pomegranate seeds on top of it. Cover it with the other half.
3. Serve hot.

Source: Jain Rasoi

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Date: Sunday 23rd March 2014

Time: 10:00am- 4.00pm

Refreshments Available

10.00am to 11.45 am



Charity no. 1137083

Venue:
Jain Centre
32 Oxford Street
Leicester
LE1 5XU
Tel: 0116 2541150

No entrance fee
Prior booking is required



Dementia

**Palliative
Care**

**Health
Risks**

**Spiritual
Health
Care**

**For Further Information
Please Contact:**

Kalpit Doshi
07828 866637

Manharlal Mehta
0208 952 1165

Mahesh Gandhi
0208 933 8882

Wellbeing

Diet

Education

Advice

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“A sacrifice to be real must cost, must hurt, and must empty ourselves. Give yourself fully to God. He will use you to accomplish great things on the condition that you believe much more in his love than in your weakness.”

— [Mother Teresa](#)

Dharma: What is it and who needs it?

This is a question often asked by many people and this is very important and right question to understand before one can rightly claim to be a believer or otherwise of any religion.

Generally, people understand Dharma to be same as religion but in my view, Dharma is different than religion and does not have an equivalent translation in English, that is why I am using the word Dharma instead of religion.

Even in India, different religions, different rishis and scholars have defined Dharma differently. Various meaning given include, cosmic law, natural law, righteousness, duty, appropriate behaviour, religion, vocation, property, teachings of Buddha, teachings of Mahavir and more.

The word Dharma is derived from the Sanskrit word 'dhri' which means to sustain. Dharma therefore means that which sustains a particular status, being or situation. So any action, or means that assist in sustaining a particular entity or state becomes Dharma of that form, being, name, place, belief, etc. etc.. So, for example if you are a human being you need a particular set of actions, resources, etc to sustain the life of human being. If that human being is a father, mother, husband, son, daughter, neighbour, Jain, Hindu, Christian, patriot, politician, engineer etc. an additional set of rules, actions and resources are required to sustain and uphold that particular status. So Dharma for A may be different than Dharma for B who is having a different set of status.

Moreover, at any point of time the same human being may be adapting different roles and therefore, his behaviour, actions etc required to sustain that set may be different at different time, circumstances, places. So in practice, Dharma is dynamic and individual and no one set of rules suffice for all beings and for all circumstances.

If one understands those requirements correctly and complies with those rules and requirements, he/she can succeed in sustaining that state and may derive satisfaction, pleasure of being in that state and will be able to progress in the spiritual

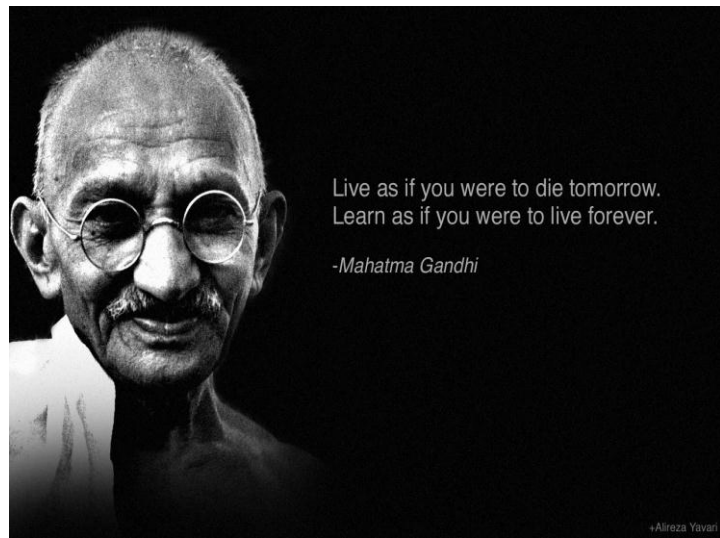
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journey. If one does not understand these requirements he/she may through his/her own action be the cause of affecting or destroying that entity or status which has been acquired and goes backwards in the spiritual journey. It is therefore, most important to understand the right from wrong, permanent from temporary and beneficial from harmful.

Human beings are given the power and the discretion to enquire and choose the course of action and therefore have a greater responsibility for his/her own fate and future. It is this ability to enquire which leads to the choice of ultimate goal of liberation from the temporary to permanence, from ignorance to knowledge and from cycle of life and death to eternity.

By definition, all actions lead to change from one situation to another. All changes involve the destruction of previous state and creation of a new state or situation. This is why Ahimsa is the ultimate Dharma for all



humans. The desire to change one state in the hope of a better state will always inevitably cause himsa and hurt to something or someone. Everything that is experienced through the senses, mind, body and intellect are going to change by nature. Not only that, but the body, mind and intellect themselves are continuously changing. It is our desire to interfere in this process for short term pleasures and refusal to accept what is there that needs to be discarded for true Ahimsa. When we do not do this we cause injury and himsa to ourselves by adding to the cycle of life and deaths, as there is no end to the desires.

So, the answer is that we all need Dharma irrespective of whom we worship or even if we do not worship or believe in anyone. We need it to stop harming ourselves first and foremost. We need it to make most of the opportunity and ability of mind body and intellect to achieve the ultimate goal of human life which is liberation, or moksh. Dharma is necessary only until we identify ourselves with the body, mind and intellect

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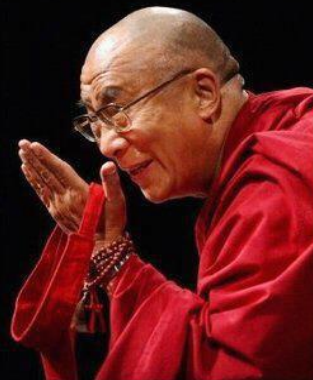
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as the self. The soul(Aatma) do not need Dharma it sustains itself without any action, or dependency on anything.

In Hindu marriage ceremony there are four rounds around fire, these four rounds represent commitment of the couple to Dharma, Arth, Kaam and Moksh. This means that resources and wealth can be accumulated and desires fulfilled in a married life but within Dharma and with the aim of Moksh.

Anil Parekh (from various sources)

The Dalai Lama, when asked what surprised him most about humanity, answered "Man. Because he sacrifices his health in order to make money. Then he sacrifices money to recuperate his health. And then he is so anxious about the future that he does not enjoy the present; the result being that he does not live in the present or the future; he lives as if he is never going to die, and then dies having never really lived."



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Lohana Community of North London, East London & Essex Brahm Samaj
, Parajiya Pattni Association London & Jain Marriage services

<http://www.ncva.co.uk/speed-dating>

Matrimonial Event

Speed Dating

Open to all Gujarati Jains & Hindus

23rd Febrary 2014 Sunday 11:00am to 5.00pm

Navnat Centre Printing House Lane Hayes UB3 1AR

Registration Fee	£20.00	Up to 17th January 2014
Registration Fee	£25.00	Up to 7th February 2014

Including Vegetarian Lunch and Free soft drinks

Registration and payment on line only

Credit and Debit cards with PayPal: Pay first after that complete the registration form on line.

<http://www.ncva.co.uk/speed-dating>

Ramesh Shah 020 8422 8988 07742 045 154
speed.dating@ncva.co.uk

Dinesh Kotecha 020 8954 7050 07816 813 239
dineshkotecha48@gmail.com

Hema Thaker 020 8554 0753 07977 939 457
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Management reserves the right of entry

Significance of Makar Sankranti

Makar Sankranti is of great significance to a devote Hindu and is one of the most important dates in the Hindu Calendar. Lord Surya (Sun God) is worshiped on this day. Every living and non-living being merges with the Brahman and Sun is the Pratyaksha-Brahman or the Brahman that can be seen. Makar Sankranti also heralds the arrival of spring.

The importance of Sun to earth and to the living beings was understood by Hindus from the very beginning. And the importance of it can be found in the Gayatri Mantra chanted to Sun (Surya) daily.

Makar Sankranti signals the end of winter and the onset of spring throughout the northern hemisphere. The period is referred to as Uttarayan Punyakalam and is considered auspicious. For the next six months, the days are longer and warmer. Legend has it that the Devas wake up after a six-month long slumber during this period.

There is also a symbolic meaning to Makara Sankranti. 'Makar' means crocodile. Sankranti means 'to cross into or change.' The 'Makara' or crocodile represents the materialistic world and 'Sankranti' gives an opportunity to get away from the clutches of the crocodile or the materialistic world.

The six month long Uttarayana begins on the Makar Sankrant day. From this day, the harshness of winter subsidizes and the days get longer. Symbolically, the Sun slowly removes darkness and ushers in the light of knowledge. Uttarayana is also the daytime of the Devas and therefore auspicious activities takes place during this period.

There are also numerous legends and myths which add to the importance of Makara Sankranti.

One of the most important myths is the death of Bhishma Pitamaha in the Mahabharata. Bhishma chose the Uttarayan period. (Bhisma had got a boon from his father that he will

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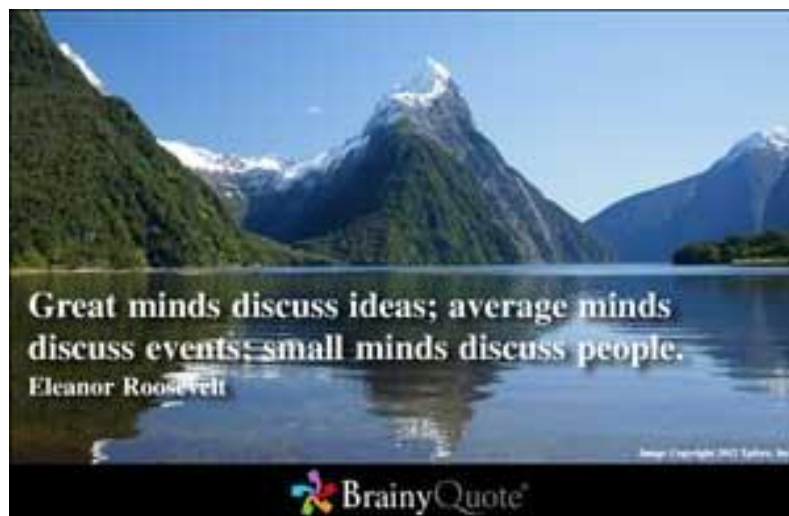
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only die when he wishes.) It is believed that people who die during Uttarayana merges with the Brahman, thus ending the cycle of rebirth.

Legend also has it that Lord Vishnu buried Asuras on this day beneath the Mandara Mountain. It signifies the end of evil and the dawn of righteousness.

Another legend is that King Bhageeratha brought Ganges down into Patala on Makara Sankranti day. This was to get salvation to his ancestors who were cursed by Sage Kapila and turned into ashes. On this day millions of people take bath in the Ganges. Makara Sankranti is also an important bathing date during Kumbh Mela and Magh Mela.

Puranas state that on Makar Sankranti day, Surya visits Lord Shani. In mythology Lord Shani, is the son of Surya.



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NCVA 35 Years Celebration

NCVA with all affiliated organisation throughout UK will be celebrating 35 years of NCVA since inception.

The celebration will be held on the **22 Jun 2014** and will include entertainment for the whole family.

The day will include a variety of events and will be fun, so be sure to mark this date in your diary and bring the whole family to enjoy this day.

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35 Year's Celebration

A DAY OF INSPIRING FUN AND ENTERTAINMENT FOR THE FAMILY

DRAMA **MAGIC** **COMEDY**
RAAS GARBA **DANCES** *plus lots more*

DELICIOUS DINNER

10am to 4pm
on 22 June 2014
Shree Prajapati Hall
Ulverscroft Road, LEICESTER
LE4 6BY

enquires
London secretary@ncva.co.uk Mahesh Gandhi Tel 02089338882
Leicester kal70_doshi@yahoo.co.uk Kalpit Doshi Tel 07828866637
Manchester kiranmentha@gmail.com Kiran Menta Tel 07836237010

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UPA gives Jain community minority status

The Union Cabinet on Monday agreed to grant the Jain community — followers of an ancient faith often confused to be a sect of Hinduism — the status of a “national minority”. This fulfills a long-standing demand by the 7-million-strong community that has sought to maintain its religious and cultural identity.



Jain community celebrates outside AICC office in New Delhi after government granted minority status to the Jain community. (PTI Photo)

The proposal, pushed by minority affairs minister K Rahman Khan and Congress vice-president Rahul Gandhi, could be a politically attractive one for the UPA government, months ahead of a general election.

As a religious minority, Jains will qualify for constitutional safeguards and special policy attention alongside five other such religious minority groups: Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Parsis.

Under the Constitution, religious minorities enjoy special rights. For example, under Article 30, they can manage their own educational institutions without interference or opening them up for reservation for students from other communities. They also become eligible for funds under the government’s minority welfare programmes. In India, 15 per cent of all funds under various programmes must be targeted towards minorities.

Jains, an otherwise affluent minority, were fighting for “national minority” status mainly to protect and promote Jainism as a distinct faith and culture. Along with Hinduism and Buddhism, it is one of the three most ancient religious faiths in the subcontinent.

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“A national minority status allows us to enjoy fundamental rights under Article 25 and Articles 26 to propagate our religion and also freedom to manage our religious affairs. Without this, our identity was eroding,” said Sanjeev Jain, an advocate of the cause.

Although Jainism has many shared concepts with Hinduism and Buddhism because of a common cultural background, scholars agree that the Jain tradition constitutes an independent faith.

Jains already enjoy minority status in 11 states. In 2005, the community’s representatives had moved the Supreme Court seeking a similar status nationally, a proposal backed by the National Minorities Commission. However, the top court had left the decision to the Centre

Source: Hindustan times



“Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself.”

— [Leo Tolstoy](#)